MINUTES

OF

CONVERSATIONS

BETWEEN

Preachers and Delegates,

LATE IN CONNEXION WITH

The Rev. Mr. Wesley,

HELD IN

NOTTINGHAM,

On the 14th &c. of MAY, 1799.

NOTTINGHAM:

PRINTED AND SOLD BY C. SUTTON;

And sold by T. HANNAM, *Leeds*; and all the PREACHERS in the NEW ITINERANCY.

PRICE TWO-PENCE.

MINUTES,

&c. &c. &c.

ACCORDING to the appointment of the Conference held at Sheffield laſt year, the Preachers and Delegates aſſembled at Nottingham, and after prayer proceeded to buſineſs.

QUESTION 1. Who compoſe the preſent Conference?

ANSWER. *Newcaſtle*, W. Stion, R. Froſt.

Leeds, J. Mort, F. Vickerman.

Manchester, W. Thom, J. Shore.

Liverpool, W. Haſlam, L. Special.

Hanley, J. Grundell, G. Ridgway.

Nottingham, G. Matthewſon, H. Taſt.

Hull, E. Oakes, J. Gray.

Sheffield, S. Eversfield, S. Knutton.

Chester, J. Winstanley, J. Parry.

Lisburn, W. Brown.

W. Brown is admitted as a Preacher and Delegate from the people in Ireland, on account of the distance of that Kingdom from the place where the Conference is held.

Mr. Hall as a member of the Annual Committee, and T. Hannam as a substitute for Mr. Oastler, were admitted as members of the Conference.—See Question 23d of Minutes for 1798.

Q. 2. Who remain on trial?

A.

J. Mort,	W. Haslam,
J. Mallinson,	G. Matthewson,
R. Bridge,	W. Stion,
J. Revil,	J. Hewitt.
W. Brown,	

All these have travelled two years.

S. Smith,	E. Oakes,
W. Driver,	J. Winstanley,
C. Donald,	J. M'Clure.
W. Farmer,	

All these have travelled one year.

Q. 3. Who are now admitted on trial?

A.

T. Shore,	P. Roby,
G. Beaumont,	J. Hurst,
G. Hendley,	G. Wall.

Q. 4

Q. 4. Who have deſiſted from travelling this year?

A. G. Barton, W. Tate.

Q 5. Who have died this year?

A. Alex. Kilham, a Miniſter whoſe praiſe is in all our churches.

In gratitude to his memory, a handſome marble monument with an inſcription has been erected by the Connexion, in the Chapel at Nottingham, where his REMAINS are depoſited.

As the inſcription contains a juſt delineation of his character we ſhall give it in full.

TO THE MEMORY OF

ALEXANDER KILHAM,

Miniſter of the Goſpel.

A faithful ſervant in the vine-yard of Chriſt,
A Zealous defender of the rights of the people,
againſt attempts to force on them
a Prieſtly Domination.

Deſerted by many of his friends,
he lived to ſee the Cauſe flouriſh
in which he died a Martyr.

In promoting the glory of God
and the happineſs of his Brethren,
he counted nothing too dear a Sacrifice:

In this purſuit,
eaſe and indulgence were deſpiſed by him.

His laſt hours
were peaceful and triumphant,
unimbittered by a moment's repentance
for having oppoſed corruption in the Church:
he bleſſed God
that he had made him inſtrumental in doing it,
and only regretted
that he had not done it more faithfully.

Committing his ſoul to his Redeemer,
he took his flight to a better World,
December 20th, 1798,
Aged 36.

Q. 6. Are there any objections to the characters of the travelling Preachers?

A. Certificates of their moral and miniſterial qualifications were received from the quarterly meetings, and they were all thought proper to be coutinued in the work.

Q. 7. How are the Preachers ſtationed this year?

A. *Newcaſtle*, E. Oakes, G. Wall.
Leeds, W. Brown, J. Hewitt.
Huddersfield, A. Cummin, W. Driver, G. Hendley.
Mancheſter, J. Grundell, T. Shore.
Hanley, W. Haſlam, S. Smith.
Liverpool,

Liverpool, W. Stion, W. Farmer.

Cheſter, J. Mallinſon, to change once a month with the young Preacher at Liverpool, 'till the Committee can ſend a ſingle Preacher to Cheſter.

Bolton, J. Revil,
Blackburn, J. Hirſt,
} Theſe two ſhall exchange once a month, or every three weeks as may be thought beſt; and the young Man ſhall change quarter about with the young Man at Liverpool.

Nottingham, W. Thom, J. Winſtanley; a ſingle Preacher to be ſent by the Committee.

Birmingham, G. Matthewſon.

Hull, S. Eversfield, P. Roby.

Sheffield, J. Mort, C. Donald.

Merthyr Tidvil, R. Bridge.

Liſburn, G. Beaumont, J. M'Clure.

Cork, A Preacher to be ſent by the Committee.

Q. 8. If the annual Committee call out a Preacher in the interval of Conference, how many months ſhall be reckoned to the firſt year?

A. If we go on the principle of annuities, a Preacher who ſhall have travelled ſix months after being called out, ought to be conſidered as having finiſhed the firſt year of his trial.

Q. 9. Shall the Preachers who are at the place where the Conference is held, be admitted as Spectators?

A. Only

A. Only thoſe who are delegated by the Circuits.

Q. 10. In what manner ſhall the members of the ſociety be admitted to attend in the time of Conference?

A. It is reſolved that they ſhall be admitted into the Galleries during ſuch of the debates as are proper to be held in public.

Q. 11. What is the Judgment of Conference concerning the annual Committee?

A. The report of their buſineſs has been received, and their conduct is fully approved.

Q. 12. Is it neceſſary that there ſhould be an annual Committee?

A. It is, and the following Perſons are appointed members this year; J. Grundell, W. Thom, S Eversfield, R. Hall, J. Swindells, R. Froſt, T. Hannam.

Q. 13. Shall the members of this Committee as ſuch form a part of the Conference?

A. No, but they ſhall appoint one of their members who ſhall be preſent at the Conference, only when their own buſineſs is to be reported.

Q. 14. Shall the Committee have power to change the ſtation of any Preacher in the courſe of the year?

A. They ſhall not alter any appointment of Conference unleſs in caſe of immorality or change of Doctrine.

Q. 15. What can be done for Cork?

A. The buſineſs of ſending a Preacher to Cork ſhall be left to the Committee, and they ſhall write immediately to our friends there.

Q.

Q. 16. How ſhall the Book-account be publiſhed?

A. It ſhall be printed on a ſheet of paper, and ſent to all the Societies in a few weeks.

Q. 17. How ſhall the buſineſs of the Book-room be managed?

A. It is determined that a Committee conſiſting of the following Perſons be formed for the purpoſe of conducting the buſineſs, and that each of them ſhall advance his ſhare of the money which may be neceſſary for it, for which ſum he ſhall receive legal intereſt, and the Conference engages to indemnify all the members of this Committee for any Loſs that they may ſuffer by that engagement.

J. Grundell,	G. Ridgway,
W. Thom,	J. Ridgway,
R. Hall,	J. Swindells,
J. Mort,	T. Scrutton,
W. Brown,	R. Oaſtler,
R. Froſt,	*Treaſurer.*

It is Reſolved, That T. HANNAM ſhall give ſecurity for the Property of the Book-room in his hand, and that it ſhall be inſured from Fire, at the proper Office, in the name of one of the Members of the above Committee.

Reſolved, That the Superintendant Preacher at Leeds ſhall tranſmit to Mr. THOM a general ſtatement of the Book Buſineſs the firſt of Dec. next.

Reſolved, That all the Superintendants ſhall ſend

ſend an exact account of the ſtock of Books on hand in their Circuits to Mr. HANNAM by the 26th of November next.

Reſolved, That all the Preachers remit their ACCOUNTS for the year to Mr. HANNAM by the laſt day of April.

Q. 18. What ſhall be done to prevent negligence in the delivery of the Books and Magazines in the Circuits?

A. If three laſt quarterly meetings in any time of a Preacher's Life, ſhall certify in writing to the Conference that he has been negligent in the delivery of the Books and Magazines in the circuit, he and his widow ſhall be excluded from all benefit from the fund; only his ſubſcription money ſhall be returned with intereſt.

Q. 19. When ſhall the yearly collection be propoſed?

A. The Preachers ſhall propoſe it at the October viſitation of the claſſes, and it ſhall be brought or ſent by the Stewards and Leaders of the Societies to the general Stewards of the Circuits at the laſt quarterly meeting.

Q. 20. Should the yearly collections be brought to the Conference?

A. Let all the yearly collections be brought to Conference and the demands of the circuits at the ſame time.

Q. 21. How ſhall Bills be paid at Conference?

A. No Bills ſhall be paid but thoſe which have been

been ſanctioned by the Quarterly Meetings; unleſs in particular caſes which ſhall have been determined by an appeal to Conference.

Q. 22. How ſhall Local Preachers be recommended to travel?

A. No Local Preacher's caſe ſhall be conſidered by the Conference unleſs it has come through the regular meetings, or ſhall be propoſed by the annual Committee.

Q. 23. What rule ſhall be obſerved with reſpect to any Letters that may be ſent to the Conference?

A. If any Letters come directed to a Delegate or to the Conference, they ſhall be firſt read in the preſence of the Preſident and the Delegates of the circuit from which they come, in order to determine whether they be ſent from the regular meetings and ought to be read in Conference.

Q. 24. What ſhall be done to prevent any Member of the Conference from departing until all the Buſineſs be finiſhed?

A. If any Member leave the Conference without having obtained public permiſſion, he ſhall be conſidered as ineligible to be choſen to the office the following year.

Q. 25. Who are the preſent Stewards of the Connexion?

A. John Swindells, *Steward* and *Treaſurer*.

Wm. Thom, *Steward* and *Correſponding Member*.

Q. 26.

Q. 26. What Chapels have been opened in our Connexion this Year?

A. Twelve. At the following Places:

Newcaſtle-upon-Tyne,	Burſlem,
York,	New Radford,
Halifax,	Carlton,
Bolton,	Chilwell,
Stockport,	Louth,
Hanley,	Tarvin.

Q. 29. What are the numbers in Society?

A.

Newcaſtle	Circuit,	-	336
Leeds	Do.	-	1248
Manchester	Do.	-	1100
Liverpool	Do.	-	210
Hanley	Do.	-	349
Sheffield	Do.	-	941
Nottingham	Do.	-	950
Hull	Do.	-	99
Chester	Do.	-	147
(Ireland) Liſburn	Do.	-	320
	Total,		5700

Q. 28.

Q. 28. What is the yearly Collection?

		£.	s.	d.
A.	Ballance from 1797,	18	0	7½
	Newcaſtle, - -	13	6	9½
	Leeds, - -	28	5	4¾
	Mancheſter, -	34	15	5
	Liverpool, -	7	17	7½
	Hanley, - -	4	4	0
	Sheffield, - -	12	17	5
	Nottingham, -	16	12	4¾
	Hull, - -	8	8	0
	Cheſter, - -	5	0	0
	£.	149	7	8

Q. 29. What was deficient in the Circuits this Year?

	£.	s.	d.
A. Newcaſtle, - -	9	10	0
Leeds, - - -	24	0	0
Mancheſter, - -	16	0	0
Liverpool, - -	19	0	0
Hull, - -	15	12	0
Cheſter, - - -	16	0	0
Allowed Mr. Barton, -	10	0	0
Mr. Kilham's Journies -	3	9	6
Mr. Brown's Do. to Ireland,	7	7	8
Journies and Letters by the Annual Committee, - -	4	8	0
Deficiency of the Quarterage for Mr. Winſtanly's Child,	5	3	4
Expences in calling out J. Hewit,	8	8	0
Do. Do. S. Smith,	4	4	0
Surgeon's Bill at Hanley, for E. Smith, - -	0	5	0
Conference Expences at Nottingham, - -	0	13	0
Conference Journal and Books for Accounts, -	1	16	11
Ballance in hand, - -	3	10	3
£.	149	7	8

Q. 30. When and where ſhall the Conference meet next Year?

A. At MANCHESTER, on WHITSUN MONDAY, June 2d.

†‡† The Conference in reviſing the Rules of the Conſtitution were of opinion, that Rule II. ſhould ſtand thus, "The nomination of Leaders ſhall be in the Leaders' Meeting, and then referred to the People for their ſanction: But the Claſſes may recommend any Perſon to the Leaders' Meeting whom they could wiſh to lead them, and none ſhall be appointed but the Perſon approved by the Claſs." And that Rule III. ought to be thus expreſſed, "The Leaders ſhall nominate Stewards for a Society, and a Majority of its Members muſt approve of the nomination before they are appointed to their office: and let one of them be changed annually: unleſs in particular caſes, agreed upon by the leaders' meeting, and ſanctioned by a majority of the people."

*** Moſt of the Preachers preſent depoſited HALF-A-GUINEA in the Hands of the Secretary, towards a FUND for the SUPPORT of SUPERANNUATED MINISTERS and WIDOWS.

TO THE

Methodist Preachers,

AND

Delegates from the People,

NOW ASSEMBLED IN CONFERENCE AT NOTTINGHAM.

Dearly beloved Brethren, and fellow Travellers in the Kingdom and Patience of our Lord,

WE for the first time Address You, fully sensible of the privileges with which we are now *favoured;* and feel ourselves happy in being called a part of the METHODIST NEW ITINERANCY.

Although we are now joined with You, we cannot but lament that there is any cause of separation from our old Brethren, many of whom we *dearly* love.——Since the death of the venerable John Wesley, we have beheld with sorrow, grevious errors (in respect of discipline) creeping

creeping into, and growing up in the Methodiſt Connection. As a part of that Body we remonſtrated repeatedly with what (in the preſent day) is improperly called the Conference on the *unſcriptural laws* that were made, and are ſtill in *being* among them. At their laſt meeting in Dublin, we addreſſed them, and pointed out ſome of thoſe things which we *thought* were wrong, and humbly requeſted an alteration of thoſe Obnoxious, Unreaſonable, and Unſcriptural Laws,—But the anſwer which we received, was, *an Expulſion from their Connection!* Notwithſtanding it is enacted in their Minutes of 1794, page 33. "That no Truſtee ſhall be removed from the Society, unleſs his crime or breach of the rules of the Society be proved in the *preſence* of the TRUSTEES and LEADERS," Contrary to both the *letter* and *ſpirit* of this Law—and likewiſe the excellent manner of the Romans, which was, to condemn no one unheard, and which Mr. Weſley recommends as a *proper rule* to direct our Conduct both in *public* and *private* life. (See his note, Acts xxv. 16.) "It is not the cuſtom of the Romans to condemn any one unheard! a rule, which as it is common to all Nations, (Courts of *Inquiſition* only excepted) ſo it ought to direct our proceedings in all affairs, not only in public, but in private life." Yet ſtrange to relate, that at the diſtance of ſeventy-three miles, they tried, found guilty, and excommunicated thirty-two Men, who were either Truſtees, Stewards, Claſs-leaders, or Local Preachers; only becauſe they wiſhed to have a voice in, &c. the formation of their own laws, the choice of their own officers, and the diſtribution of their own property. We leave you to judge of our feelings

on this trying occaſion, when we tell you that ſome of us, have been approved members of the Methodiſt Connection from thirty to forty years. Though in conſequence of this treatment, we were at firſt caſt down, the great head of the Church did not forſake us, the Lord Jehovah was our Strength and Refuge.—He was our SUN to give us light, and our Shield to defend us in the time of ſore perſecution. He pointed out our way. *The Good Shepherd* hath ſhewn us *where he makes his Flocks to reſt at Noon.*

We are now joined in heart and mind with you; being perfectly ſatisfied, that the Lord approves of you as a part of his CHURCH MILITANT. We are happy in having it in our power to inform you, that although we are in an infant ſtate, our numbers are increaſing—and there is a pleaſing proſpect before us of a great ingathering of Souls to the fold of Chriſt.—We bleſs the Lord that he is calling out Men among you, who are likely to be faithful labourers in his vineyard—may they increaſe more and more—"till the vintage is all gathered in, and the Earth is renewed, and the Univerſe filled with the Glory of God."

Signed in behalf, and by order of the
IRISH BRETHREN,

WM. JOHNSTON.

Liſburn, April 28th, 1799.

TO

TO THE
Societies in the New Itinerancy,
IN THE
LISBURN CIRCUIT, *Ireland.*

Dear Brethren,

WE received with thankfulneſs your affectionate Addreſs. It was read in full Conference—And we all joined heartily in praiſing the great head of the Church, who has inclined you to claim your RIGHTS as MEN and CHRISTIANS. You have acted at once with firmneſs and prudence, and you have already been crowned with conſiderable ſucceſs. Go on, therefore, and continue to add to your virtue, knowledge—till you underſtand all the good and acceptable and perfect will of God. Plead earneſtly with the great Father of lights to give you a right underſtanding in all things, and let the holineſs of your hearts and lives keep pace with your increaſing information. Put away far from you, all evil ſurmiſings, unkind thoughts, and hard ſpeeches. Render not railing for railing—your cauſe cannot be defended by ſuch weapons—it needs only to be examined *candidly* in order to be embraced *heartily*.—We are not ſurpriſed at the treatment you have met with for the ſame cauſe muſt always produce the ſame effects on both ſides the water.

Let

Let us dear Brethren keep conſtantly in view the conduct of our great Legiſlator, when he was reviled, he reviled not again, when he ſuffered he *threatned* not—let us go and do likewiſe. Then will his hand be ſtretched out in our defence—and his glory will be ſeen in the midſt of us.——We ſhall rejoice in his loving kindneſs and tender mercy and come within the reach of that gracious promiſe, "He ſhall beautify the meek with Salvation"—Remember always to diſtinguiſh between the virtue of a Character, and the truth of a Doctrine. You are not oppoſing Men but Meaſures—Let the deſire of your hearts often be expreſſed at the Throne of Grace in the earneſt prayer of our Poet——

"O Arm us with the Mind,
Meek lamb, which was in thee;
And let our knowing zeal be join'd,
With perfect Charity."

For Charity never faileth—Love is the law of our Maſter's Kingdom—the great Leſſon taught at his School—and the mark by which all his faithful Servants are diſtinguiſhed. That the love of Chriſt may conſtrain you to love one another, with a pure heart fervently to love the Brethren from whom (for Conſcience ſake) you have ſeparated—and to love all in every place who call on the name of the Lord Jeſus, is the prayer of your affectionate Brethren, in behalf of the Conference,

JOHN GRUNDELL, *Preſident.*
ROBT. HALL, *Secretary.*

Addreſs

Addreſs to the Connexion.

Dear Brethren,

IT is with pleaſure we take a retroſpect of your unſhaken ſtedfaſtneſs in the cauſe of truth, and of religious freedom. Your firmneſs indeed might naturally be inferred from the nature of that glorious cauſe in which you are embark'd; a cauſe which will ever raiſe the Mind ſuperior to fear, and impreſs on it that true dignity that every one muſt feel when convinced that his conduct is ſupported by Scripture, by Reaſon, and by Truth.

You have hitherto had much oppoſition, but your honeſty and integrity have borne you through every difficulty. Your future conflicts, however, will be comparatively inconſiderable, for the attention of your opponents will be every day divided in proportion as your borders are enlarged.—Strive for the wisdom of the Serpent, and the harmleſſneſs of the Dove; for you may be aſſured, if you be prudent, nothing can ultimately prevent your proſperity. Let it fully appear that the predictions of your downfall, grounded on your ſuppoſed

poſed inſtability and diſſentions, are utterly void of foundation. Conſider that much, very much depends on your preſent conduct, for the attention of Mankind is anxiouſly directed to the iſſue of this glorious conteſt.—The highly important queſtion "is this cauſe of God or of Man?" is on the point of being fully and effectually decided, and you are endeavouring to contradict the opinions and aſſertions of *wiſe Men after the fleſh*, by indubitable facts. Striſe, contention, and diviſion have been foretold, as the conſequence of that form of Government you are endeavouring to adopt; Let therefore, love and unanimity abound as the only means of contradicting theſe ſurmiſes, and let every individual be deeply impreſs'd with the importance of his own conduct, and that beſides the former motives to love and good works, an additional one ariſes from his being engaged in ſupporting rational church government and religious liberty, intimately connected with the happineſs of thouſands.

At preſent we may properly ſay, we have no dependance on an arm of fleſh; ſilver and gold we have none, or at moſt, but a very moderate ſhare of it. We have yet no funds, prudence however, requires that we ſhould have one for the ſupport of aged Miniſters and Widows, but ſhould he, who tries the heart and reins, ſee that this would not be to his glory, may he convince us of it, or by his over-ruling providence, baffle every attempt to form it.

But that which gives us the greateſt proſpect of love and unanimity, is the happy combination of the

the Preachers with the People ; this affords us a pleaſing reflection, and the uſual grounds of contention are now removed. The Conference are now the immediate objects of your own choice ; and if ever you ſuppoſe any of your laws to be contrary to Reaſon and Scripture, a ſuitable application from your quarterly meeting, through your Delegate, cannot fail to bring this into full diſcuſſion, and an alteration will take place if your united Brethren are of your opinion.——— Only, dear Brethren, be faithful, and your way is ſufficiently plain, be fervent at the throne of Grace, and there can be no doubt of your proſperity. Should any mad Prophet pour out his Anathemas on you, and wiſh or predict your downfall, you will ſhew his error, and make it fully appear that there is no enchantment againſt Jacob, nor divination againſt Iſrael.

Though you ought to act with meekneſs and moderation, yet ever be impreſſed with the high importance of thoſe truths you have embraced.— Conſcious integrity will ſupport your ſteps, and give you fortitude in every trial. Though "Vile Apoſtates tremble in a calm" 'tis in vain that the ſtorms of life are raiſed againſt the innocent followers of Scripture and of Truth. In all your conduct let no unkind expreſſions or inſinuations againſt your opponents ever proceed from you.— As the wrath of Man can never help the cauſe of God, ſo remember that though a bad cauſe may have recourſe to ſuch auxillaries, a good one will ever prove its own ſupport.

Signed in behalf of the Conference,

JOHN GRUNDELL, *Preſident*,

ROBT. HALL, *Secretary*.

☞ *The plan of a Day-School, to be conducted on the Principles of Reason and Religion, was considered by the Conference: and the Friends at Nottingham were desired to send the outlines of it to the different Circuits.*